come back home (or don't) by broikawa

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eddie needed reasons to stay in derry

or ;; it's the 90s! repression galore

come back home (or don't)

Author's Note:

> *posts this while in my "i gotta finish nanowrimo" frenzy*
>
> enjoy !

Eddie wished he was still in New York.

There was a weird feeling over Derry, and he'd had it ever since he'd passed over the bridge; a constant, creeping hum on the back of his neck to leave as fast as he'd came, to get out while he still could.

He really, *really* didn't want to be here.

They were at the restaurant now. While everyone chatted and caught up, exchanging stories after nearly thirty years of being apart, Eddie tried to think of all the reasons that being here was a good thing.

1: He was away from his mother.

At first, he felt guilty for saying this. Sonia was a sweet woman, really, and Eddie loved her, really, but he was getting tired of having her over his shoulder everyday all the time, and the lack of that was, though weird and unfamiliar, like taking a puff of his inhaler when he couldn't breathe; settling and freeing and *good* . He wasn't sure – besides the fact that she insisted, constantly, that she needed him, that *he* needed *her* – why he still lived with her. Maybe he loved her too much, maybe he didn't want to let her down, maybe he just felt bad, maybe the house would be too empty, too lonely, without her, maybe *he* would be too lonely without her, maybe it was just nice to have someone else in the house and someone else to make you dinner and someone else to help with chores.

The only real solution he could see to his moving out was finding someone else to move in with, but he didn't have any close enough friends that weren't married or already living with someone, and he never had the best luck with women; he'd never even had a

girlfriend, not in high school or college or post-grad, never. He felt, sometimes, like he was missing out on dating and marriage and sex, but it was more pressure than desire because he was forty, goddamnit, and how lame do you have to be to be forty and have zero experience in dating?

It wasn't like he'd *never* loved anyone before; he loved his mother dearly, and he'd been sure all his life that he'd loved someone in his childhood, if only he could've remembered who they had been. He knew now that it was his friends, the Losers Club, everyone at the table (as well as Stan, currently absent), who he had loved. He'd be lying if he said he didn't love them – they were the closest friends he'd ever had – and a bit of out-of-town amnesia would never stop that. That was another reason he was glad to be here.

2: He was with his friends.

It was nice to be in a room of people that loved you and made it known. They were all a little in love with each other, he figured, he hoped. They'd caught up like they met up every weekend to do this; eat good food, drink a bit too much (though Eddie never participated; he could handle the smell of alcohol, but never the taste), smile until the corners of their mouths hurt, laugh until their were stomachs aching. It felt so *good* to laugh and smile and joke like nothing else mattered, like they didn't have anything or anyone waiting for them back home, like there wasn't a goddamn clown after them. They would talk about that later, the clown, after dinner, and Eddie, for this reason among others, never wanted dinner to end.

It did end, and quite abruptly, when the fortune cookies were brought out, each containing its own horror for each of the Losers to crack open. They went to the library after this, where Eddie would continue to wonder why he was still here. Richie was leaving in the morning; maybe he could too, possibly catch a ride with him to the airport and get back to New York as fast as he could.

3: Dinner.

Even with the fortune cookie incident, he had to admit that his meal had been really good.

4: Richie.

This one was hard to explain.

Of course, he was beyond glad to see all of his friends.

Mike, still an old soul, though with as much energy and enthusiasm and pep in his step as he had when he was younger. Still the kindest person in the room, no matter where you were or who you were with. Anyone of them could've been one of the missing kids that summer, and he figured he owed his life to one Michael Hanlon, they all did, as if it weren't for him, they wouldn't have known what they'd needed to about Pennywise and the history of Derry.

Ben, Haystack, successful as ever. He'd seen his face on a few magazines before, though he didn't know it was him of course, and he'd always felt oddly proud of him despite never remembering knowing him. He wished he had known him, and had known he lived in New York like he did. It would've been nice to have someone in the city, and it would've been nice to have that person be Ben. Ben was the kindest of them all, of everyone he'd ever known, always there to help you get back up when you fell, and he was happy to see that that fact had never changed.

Bev, oh, dear Beverly. Eddie especially loved Beverly, the sweetest girl he'd ever known and who he was more than grateful to ever call his friend. She'd grown up beautiful, as expected, and was successful, as expected, and in the few hours that they'd all been together Eddie came to the conclusion that out of all of them he was most disappointed to not remember Beverly throughout his life. She was tough and brave and strong and so many things Eddie thought himself not to be and if he had been able to know her as he grew older he figured his life would have been ten times brighter than it was.

Stan, the man himself, who wasn't there, who would never be there anymore, though Eddie didn't want to think about that. He wondered what he was like once he'd grown up and he'd do anything to change what'd happen just to find out. Out of all the Losers, he'd been the most scared of It and though what he'd done shocked everyone, the fact that he hadn't shown up wasn't a complete surprise. Of course

they didn't blame him; all of them, Eddie assumed, wanted to do the same; stay at home, safe, away from Derry and the clown. And though Stan had been the most frightened of fighting Pennywise, he had to be the bravest of them all.

Bill, who he was glad to see become a writer, that he never stopped creating stories and worlds and characters; he was always so good at that, and it'd be a crime if he didn't let those stories out into the world. He'd picked up a few of his books (unknowingly, of course) and though he wasn't very fond of some of the endings he enjoyed them, and they meant something more to him now that he knew Bill had been his friend, his brother, all those years ago.

Richie was different.

He was still glad to see him, obviously, more than glad; it'd been nearly thirty years and he had loved him as much as he did the other Losers but something about him was different. There was a different light to him that he had; Eddie looked at him different than he did the others, and his feelings towards him were similar, though off, like a Spot the Differences game in a colouring book. It seemed the same on the surface – he was a childhood friend, one of his closest, of course he loved him, of course he did – but looking closer, something wasn't quite right. If he were a child, he might've said it was because he was annoying (in a good way) or joked too much (even if his jokes were funny) or called him dumb names (which he continued to do that night). He couldn't put his finger on it.

Every 'Eds' and 'Eddie Spaghetti' and 'Spaghetti Man' made his heart rate speed up, flushed his face, made his cheeks warm. And he couldn't lie, he had grown handsome; the mustache on his face suited him well and he was built nicely and he dressed well and he was tall as ever; still taller than him, anyway. And he couldn't lie, he caught himself staring at him more than once, at his shoulders or his hair or his legs or his face. And he couldn't lie, he found himself staying close to him most of the night, sitting next to him at dinner and standing next to him at the library and laying next to him on the floor at the Inn. He found any excuse to touch him; holding his shoulder when the cookies attacked and touching his back at the library just before they left; a friendly gesture, nothing more; and giving him light shoves at stupid jokes and poking at his side as he

teased him back.

It became clear what he was feeling later into the night when he went upstairs to get ready for bed, what could be the last sleep of his life, and came out from the bathroom to find the other man sitting on his bed looking down at his hands.

“Eds,” he said, soft. Too tired to argue, he let this one go.

“Did you need something?” he asked

“I wanted to talk to you, ‘s all.”

He leaned on the dresser and looked at him (not too long, of course, he couldn’t; just glances, half a second, nothing more).

“You okay?” Richie asked him.

He put on a smile. “What do you mean?”

“You look a little flushed. Hope I didn’t scare ya’ or something.” He chuckled.

“No, no,” he said, “I’m fine. What was it you wanted to talk about?”

Richie rubbed his cheek. “It’s nice seeing y’all again.”

“Yeah,” he said, “it is.”

“I’ve been having this sort of… weird feeling about you all night,” he started to say, and quickly added, “I don’t mean that in a bad way or anything, Eds, just that–”

“I have too.”

Richie looked at him. “You have?” he asked, the quietest he’d been all night.

He nodded.

“What d’you think it is?”

Eddie met his eyes.

He couldn’t lie, not anymore. Neither could Richie.

His lips were warm against his.

Though he needed more reasons to stay in Derry, he knew exactly where he wanted to go if he didn’t.

Author's Note:

> eddie: it's the 90s and all i know is be gay, repress, love richie, and lie
>
> tumblrs:
> etherealparrish (main)
> ohmyhoneybun (lovecore/mlm)
> adriendoesthings (studyblr/langblr/bookblr)
> witchcraftparrish (witchblr)
> historicalsgnificance (dark academia)
> (WIP!!!) adrienwritesthings (writeblr)